

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SCA-01

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FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 871

C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 0428

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CGEN, BU

SUBJECT: DIVIDED FAMILIES

REF: (A) SOFIA A-111, DEC 10, 1975; (B) SOFIA 0163

1. IN FEBRUARY 25, 1976 CONVERSATION ON ANOTHER MATTER, ACTING CONSULAR DEPARTMENT CHIEF KOVACHEV BROUGHT UP SUBJECT OF THE LIST OF DIVIDED FAMILIES THAT WE HAD PRESENTED TO MFA NOVEMBER 26, 1976 (REF A). KOVACHEV STATED THAT THE MINISTRY WAS WORKING ON THE LIST AND THAT "APPROXIMATELY TEN PERSONS" ON THE LIST HAD ALREADY BEEN ISSUED EXIT DOCUMENTATION. (EMBASSY RECORDS SHOW THAT FOUR CASES INVOLVING SIX PERSONS HAVE BEEN FAVORABLY RESOLVED SINCE DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL'S SEPTEMBER 18, 1975 CONVERSATION ON THE SUBJECT WITH CHAIRMAN ZHIVKOV. SEE PARA 4, REF B).

2. KOVACHEV WENT ON TO STATE THAT IN SOME RESPECTS THE LIST WAS INVALID BECAUSE IT INCLUDED PERSONS WHO (A) DID NOT ACTUALLY WISH TO TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES, OR (B) HAD NOT APPLIED FOR PERMISSION TO TRAVEL OR WHO HAD APPLIED IMPROPERLY, OR (C) COULD NOT BE IDENTIFIED BECAUSE INCOMPLETE OR OBSOLETE INFORMATION HAD BEEN PROVIDED.

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3. KOVACHEV WAS ASKED TO IDENTIFY SUCH CASES TO THE

EMBASSY SO THAT WE COULD ASSIST IN PROVIDING ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHERE NECESSARY AND HELP ENSURE PROPER DOCUMENTATION WAS FILED. KOVACHEV PASSED OVER THIS IN SILENCE. HE THEN STATED THAT WHEN THE SPONSOR IN THE US HOLDS BULGARIAN CITIZENSHIP, HE MUST APPLY TO THE BULGARIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING FOR VISITS BY BULGARIAN RELATIVES, AND THAT AMERICAN CONGRESSMEN AND SENATORS WHO MIGHT HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THESE CASES SHOULD ALSO ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO BULGARIAN DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION IN WASHINGTON. (PRESUMABLY KOVACHEV WAS REFERRING TO PRESENT AMCITS WHO HAVE NOT FORMALLY RENOUNCED BULGARIAN NATIONALITY PER BULGARIAN LAW.)

4. KOVACHEV WAS REMINDED WE CONSIDERED A POLITICAL DECISION TO RESOLVE THE DIVIDED FAMILY QUESTION EXPEDITIOUSLY WAS TAKEN BY CHAIRMAN ZHIVKOV AT THE TIME OF HIS SEPTEMBER 1975 MEETING WITH DEPUTY SECRETARY INGERSOLL, AND THAT WE HOPED THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS DECISION WOULD NOT BECOME BOGGED DOWN IN TECHNICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC PROBLEMS. WE HOPED THAT THE FEW CASES ON WHICH FURTHER INFORMATION OR DOCUMENTATION MIGHT BE NEEDED WOULD NOT HOLD UP THE QUICK RESOLUTION OF THE OTHERS.

5. COMMENT: WHETHER KOVACHEV, WHO IS NEW TO HIS POSITION, WAS SPEAKING ON INSTRUCTIONS OR ON HIS OWN IS NOT CLEAR. IN ANY CASE, WE SEE NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY DEBATING BUREAUCRATIC INS AND OUTS. WE SHOULD STICK TO THE LINE THAT A POLITICAL DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN BY THE CHIEF OF STATE AND WE AWAIT ITS IMPLEMENTATION. HOWEVER, WHERE SUFFICIENT INFORMATION IS LACKING FOR GOB TO TAKE ACTION, WE SHOULD OF COURSE PROVIDE IT.
HERZ

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